

Dear FCC, What follows is a series of increasingly enthusiastic comments on Verizon's adorable attempts at customer service.

(taken from the internet)

### Part 1: Verizon Can Bite Me

Recently, I switched to MCI for my home phone line. But once their special promotion was over, I realized that Verizon is actually cheaper, and decided to switch back. This has not been an easy process.

I swear, it's like they're trying to punish me for switching back to them after my brief affair with MCI. You'd think they'd be happy to have a customer back. You'd think they might even try to encourage me to switch. But not Verizon. I must pay for my crime of leaving, atone for my sin of attempting to seek out a better deal and returning to the flock when I didn't find one. They only have customer service reps available Monday-Friday from 8-5, when all normal people are at work. Not only do I have to call them from work, but I have to wait 30 days before I can safely switch to the lowest possible level of service without incurring a "connection fee."

Funny how switching to MCI didn't require one of those, but switching back to Verizon does.

I swear, I am this fucking close to just saying "screw the home phone, I'm going cell-only."

Not that I'm bitter.

### Part 2: Verizon Is More Evil Than Previously Believed

Just when I thought I was safe from Verizon's evil plans....it seems Verizon has found a new way to screw over its customers. Upon returning to my humble abode after work yesterday, I was greeted by a package I was not expecting. What did this package contain, you ask? I'll tell you.

A DSL connection package from Verizon!

A letter thanking me for ordering DSL service!

This would have been great if I had actually ordered Verizon DSL. But I hadn't, and I entered a special state of bewilderment and rage.

Today, from my cell phone, sitting at my desk at work, I called Verizon to see what the hell was up. 26 minutes later, I had my answer and my solution. Apparently they signed me up without my knowledge, giving me a free month of DSL in order to entice me to keep it and to find a way to charge me \$29.95 a month. (Not bad for high-speed internet, of course, but I've already got high-speed internet and I'm happy with it and certainly not about to switch to Satan's DSL Service when I've got a

fast connection that works from a company I can actually contact.)

They're going to send me a return label, which I can stick on the box to take it to the post office and send it back. But guess what? If I don't complete this task within 30 days, they're going to charge me anyway! Even though I never ordered it! Pretty sure that's illegal. Sending someone something they didn't ask for and then charging their credit card for it when they don't return it fast enough? Good job, Verizon. You suck more than I ever thought possible.

### Part 3: I Go Batshit Crazy When Verizon Sends Me a Letter

Verizon sent me a rather comical letter imploring me to switch back. So I finally gave them a piece of my mind. Here it is, in slightly edited form (I omitted my own identifying information):

November 6, 2004

Mark W. Adams P.O. Box 1915-D Beltsville, MD 20704-1915

To Mark W. Adams:

I recently received a letter from you regarding my decision to, for the second time, end my local phone service with Verizon. You seemed to be under the impression that my experiences with Verizon have been positive, among other ridiculous errors. I am writing now to correct your ignorance.

First of all, you spelled my name wrong. This may seem like a petty concern, but I assure you this type of careless error is the hallmark of Verizon customer service. I will illustrate this now.

The first time I left Verizon, it was simply to pursue a better bargain. MCI was offering airline miles and a free month of service, and I couldn't resist. But after I used my miles and my free month was over, I realized that my old Verizon bill had been a few dollars a month lower than my current MCI bill. Naturally, I decided I should switch back.

I realized almost immediately that this was easier said than done. First of all, Verizon's customer service hours are absurd: any employed person is likely to be busy at work for all of them. I had to wait until I happened to be home sick one day to even begin the process.

When I was finally able to make the call, I spoke to a customer service representative who was confused, slow, and completely unhelpful. What I had assumed would be a simple request turned into a rather painful hour on the phone with an utter moron. First, he insisted that I actually owed Verizon some money dating back to before I left the first time. What on earth? I had absolutely not received a bill of any kind. But I couldn't immediately find a record of what payments I had made and when I had

begun service with MCI, so I shrugged and authorized an electronic transaction to pay the amount I allegedly owed. (Later I realized that Verizon charges for services a month ahead, so I would have already been paid up when I left, and therefore couldn't possibly have owed any money at that point.)

To add insult to injury, I then learned I would have to sign up for a higher (read: more expensive) level of service than I wanted in order to avoid paying an outlandish "connection fee," which made absolutely no sense to me. MCI didn't charge me a connection fee to switch to their service, how is it that Verizon requires such a thing for me to switch back? Perhaps the "connection fee" goes to pay the salary of the witless man who attempted to place my order. Speaking as someone in the field of economics, I can assure you that you would save your company quite a bit of money (and perhaps be able to do away with your "connection fee") simply by hiring people capable of performing their jobs.

Still, once the ordeal with the phone call was over I assumed that all would be well. Or at least relatively well, since I had been instructed to call back a certain number of days after my service began in order to switch to the level of service that I actually wanted (which, as you'll recall, I could not get initially if I did not wish to pay the "connection fee").

As it turned out, however, my troubles with Verizon had not come to an end. Indeed, the worst was yet to come. Upon returning to my home one day, I discovered that I had a package waiting for me. I was puzzled, since I was not expecting any deliveries. I was even more puzzled to discover that this package came from Verizon. Quite curious by this point, I opened it up.

To my horror and shock, I discovered inside a letter welcoming me to Verizon DSL and the equipment necessary to set up a connection! Especially disturbing were the threats contained therein to begin charging me for said equipment and service, neither of which I had ever, under any circumstance, expressed even the slightest bit of interest in! As you can imagine, I was on the phone with a Verizon customer representative within seconds. Or at least, I would have been, if their customer service hours hadn't already ended for the day!

When I finally managed to find a free moment (at work, mind you, since I am always at work when Verizon has their poorly trained personnel manning the phones) to make my outraged phone call, I was told by yet another idiot that the person who signed me up for local phone service must have accidentally forgotten to mention that he was, as part of a promotion, also signing me up for Verizon DSL! Woops! When I expressed my anger and disbelief, I was simply told, "Oh, they're not supposed to do that." I am quite sure they're not! I was told that in order to avoid being charged for the equipment, I would have to send it back—and within a certain number of days, or I'd be charged anyway!!! Even though I'd never requested it, expressed an interest in it, said yes to it, or ever HEARD about it!!! It was absolutely the most unbelievable thing!

Of course, sending someone something in the mail, unsolicited, and then attempting to charge them for it (!! ) is completely illegal. Under the law I would have been well within my rights to keep the goods. Still, mindful of the fact that Verizon's customer service representatives have the combined mental power of a slice of cheese, I decided I would simply give up and send the damned thing back.

It was a few days after this that I got a very polite, enthusiastic, convincing call from an MCI salesperson who wanted me to switch my phone service once again. At first I hesitated, since I had just gone through so much strife in order to switch to Verizon. I also knew that MCI was theoretically going to cost me more money in the long run, after I finally got my Verizon service down to the level I desired. But then I realized: I would have to call Verizon again to make the change I wanted in my level of service. Filled with hatred of Verizon and fear of having to spend any more time on the phone with one of their simian representatives, I decided to leave Verizon once again.

Sadly, the story does not even end there. Apparently Verizon put some sort of block on my account, preventing MCI from taking over my service. No one at either Verizon or MCI seemed to understand how this could have happened. After a few minutes with MCI's intelligent, well-trained representative and many more minutes with Verizon's troupe of performing chimpanzees, I finally managed to settle the issue and became an MCI customer once again.

So you can see why I felt compelled to respond to your ridiculous letter. I hate Verizon. Do you understand this? I am not merely a "dissatisfied customer." I shudder when I hear the name "Verizon" spoken. I tell everyone I know, everyone I meet and even total strangers about the evil that Verizon has visited upon my life. I have even been tempted to spit on Verizon employees when I see them on the subway (I have contented myself with giving them dirty looks). That is how deep my hatred and revulsion goes.

If you are interested in making amends, I suggest that an apology is in order. Furthermore, I would like to be permanently removed from all of Verizon's mailing lists, so I don't have to spend so much time tearing up and burning their advertisements.

Before I end this missive, I'd like to impress upon you the level of animosity I bear your employer. I am an MCI customer even though it's more expensive, because I actually hate Verizon that much. Furthermore, if Verizon were the last local phone service provider left in the area, I would actually choose to NOT HAVE A LOCAL PHONE AT ALL rather than have to deal with Verizon again in any way. That is how much I hate Verizon.

## Epilogue

A year later, I moved to a new place and found out that my new roommates had recently ditched their home phone line since they all just used their cell phones anyway. So I no longer have a land line. And you know what? It's fine. No Verizon, no MCI, no ridiculous charges for having long distance available on my line even though I don't make long distance calls from it.

I know some people who have Verizon Wireless for their cell phones, and I always shudder to hear it. I realize that Verizon and Verizon Wireless are theoretically two separate entities, and one has nothing to do with the other. However, to me it's the name that's important. I'm not going to send my kids to Hitler Day Care, and I'm not going to get a Verizon Wireless phone. It's just not right.